Biometric technology for issuing ration cards

3286. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh is using Iris biometrie technology for issuance of ration cards;

(b) whether it is a fact that BPL card was issued to a famous tennis player from Andhra Pradesh;

(c) if so, how does Government justify to say that Iris biometrie technology is a foolproof method to issue ration cards in the State; and

(d) the action taken, on the basis of instruction issued by his Ministry, on persons having a bogus ration cards in the State of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. No ration card was issued to any famous tennis player in Andhra Pradesh. However, a card was fraudulently generated by the operator using a tainted photo of Ms. Sania Mirza, the famous tennis player.

This has not happened because of failure of iris technology. The main reason for that is the fact that there were more than 1800 Designated Photographic Locations spread all across the State and it was not possible to connect all of them to one another. These DPL centres worked as stand-alone centres and therefore de-duplication at the time of enrolment could not be done.

(d) Since iris images are unique for individual persons, all such instances are now getting unearthed. This has been possible during a de-duplication exercise taken up by Andhra Pradesh government, which includes bio-metric based de-duplication and door to door verification at field level for weeding out bogus/ duplicate cards and cards held in the names of the non-existing persons/families. Based on results of this, the state government is taking action to eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards from coverage under Targeted Public Distribution System. The state government would complete this exercise in the whole state by end of January, 2010.

Shortage of sugar in Andhra Pradesh

3287. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government is aware of the fact that due to non-release of entire quantity of levy sugar by some sugar factories, Andhra Pradesh has been facing shortage of 13.998.30 metric tonnes of sugar from March. 2009 to September, 2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof;